

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
November 10, 2008

University Master Planning

Over the past several days we held seven sessions for input on our Campus Master Plan. These meetings, which included architects from Neumann Smith Associates, involved more than 250 people, including sessions that were standing room only. I want to thank everyone who took time to provide input into this process and to express their ideas about the future of the Big Rapids campus.

After the first of the year the architects will return to campus with a synthesis of what they have heard and we will schedule critique sessions for review of these concepts. The goal is to have an updated Master Plan for presentation to the Board of Trustees in March. The master planning effort is a direct outgrowth of the goals and initiatives in the University Strategic Plan.

The master planning sessions were especially timely as our Board of Trustees approved the University Strategic Plan at their meeting on Friday. In doing so, Board Chair Jim Havemen noted the engagement of the University community in this effort, congratulated faculty, staff, administration and students on this important milestone, and thanked Professor Robert von der Osten for his leadership and commitment to this process. I want to add my own appreciation and look forward to working with you and the members of the Strategic Planning and Resource Council to implement the Strategic Plan.

Ferris Foundation Gala

Last Friday we held our annual Ferris Foundation Gala at the Amway Grand Hotel. This year's event, hosted by *Grand Rapids Magazine* editor Carol Valade, featured a keynote address by best-selling author Mitch Albom and a celebration of alumnus Dr. Ron Mahoney, Ferris' first Humanitarian Award recipient. Dr. Mahoney sets the bar high for future Humanitarian Award recipients. As a surgeon during the Vietnam War, he helped save many lives during extraordinarily trying circumstances. More recently, he has worked to set up rural cardiac clinics near Houston, Texas and was selected as cardiologist of the year in a city known for cardiac care. Dr. Mahoney's career began with his pharmacy degree from Ferris State University.

Many of you have read Mitch Albom's remarkable book, *Tuesdays with Morrie*. In my remarks at the gala, I quoted some of the wisdom of Morrie - a former professor of Albom's - that our keynote speaker recounted in his book: "The way you get meaning into your life is to devote yourself to loving others, devote yourself to your community around you, and devote yourself to creating something that gives you purpose and meaning."

I want to thank everyone whose extraordinary efforts helped to make this gala the most successful in our history, with record numbers of people in attendance and the largest amount of sponsorship support in history. I want to thank the many, many people who contributed time in

organizing the event, attending the gala and securing sponsorship support. I especially want to recognize our Platinum Level sponsors: Barnes and Noble College Bookstores, Dell, Rockford Construction, and Wolverine Power Marketing Cooperative. Proceeds from the gala go to fund student scholarships and faculty merit awards.

New University Advancement and Marketing Vice President

I am pleased to announce that John Willey has accepted our offer to become the new Vice President for University Advancement and Marketing. John holds a master's degree in history from Vanderbilt University and another in nonprofit management/education policy analysis from Columbia University. John's long history of service to higher education includes having served as Vice President for Institutional Advancement at Lyon College; Vice President for Development and University Relations at Ohio Northern University; and Special Counsel and Vice President for Institutional Advancement at Drake University. He has a long history of fundraising and marketing success, and has led multiple successful capital campaigns. His interactions here on campus showed in a very concrete way his philosophy that emphasizes approachability, patience, creativity and openness. These traits and his breadth of experience will, I believe, be a very good match for our needs here at Ferris.

Thank you to everyone who attended interview sessions for this position - and special thanks to the members of an excellent search committee, who were ably led by Jeremy Mishler and Susan Starkey, and to the members of the UA&M team who paid close attention to this hiring process. John plans to join our University in mid-January.

Sign Up for Emergency Alerts

If you have not done so already, I urge you to sign up to receive text alerts on your cell phone. This will help the University communicate with you in the event of an emergency situation, including closings due to weather or other disruptions.

To sign up, visit MyFSU and click on the link in the "Emergency Text Alerts" channel. Short Message Service (SMS) text messaging must be enabled on your cell phone account to receive text messages.

You will be responsible for any charges from receiving text messages - including a monthly test message - that may be incurred from enrolling in this service. Your contact information will be kept confidential and will not be used for any other purpose.

We have been working hard to have layers of emergency communication channels that can reach members of the Ferris community both on and off-campus. This text alert service is an important element of this layered approach to keeping you informed of events that may unfold quickly.

This is also an appropriate time to encourage departments that have not yet seen the "Shots Fired" DVD to contact Public Safety and schedule a time to do so. Emergency preparation is something that can get pushed aside in the hustle and bustle of daily activities, but can make a crucial difference should the unforeseen happen. Please take time today to help our University be as prepared as possible for any contingency.

Good News

Congratulations to our Lady Bulldogs Cross Country team who qualified for the NCAA Championships this past Saturday. This is the first time since 1987 that our Women's Cross Country team will compete at the championship, which will be held at Slippery Rock University on November 22.

Sincerely,

David L. Eisler
President